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ABSTRACT

Resource acquisition is a general process active in all social organizations. The relative success of organizational resource mobilization determines whose goals and values will be met. Several factors impinge on resource mobilization, including suborganizational levels, technological sophistication, professionalization, and unionization. Environmental factors include dispersion, quantity, and stability of resource suppliers. Budgeting and resource mobilization are closely related, and some budgeting processes may be better understood if analyzed through the framework of resource mobilization. Research for this project was funded under a Title III grant. (Author/RA)

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ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS OF RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

by

David O. Porter

As Consultant to:

OPERATION PEP: A State-Wide Project to
Prepare Educational Planners for California

EA 003 502

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PREFACE

The continuity and effectiveness of educational organizations are determined by the balance that they maintain in specific organization-environment transactions. Each organization carries on both input and output exchanges with its environment. The effectiveness of an educational organization is determined by measuring the degree to which organizational outputs fulfill societal change requirements and satisfy organizational and individual needs and desires. Outputs that are responsive to human needs and desires enable the organization to establish and maintain advantageously-balanced input and output exchanges with its environment. When organization-environment transactions are favorable to the organization, each new set of outputs provokes a fresh supply of inputs from the environment.

The mechanisms which are operative in organization-environment transactions are not clearly understood. In an effort to secure more information regarding the input exchanges of organizations, OPERATION PEP asked David O. Porter to define the organizational aspects of resource mobilization. This document presents resource mobilization as the active aspect of resource acquisition by organizations and discusses the differential capabilities of organizations to mobilize resources. Recognizing that only limited resources are available, this document has been designed to orient managers of educational organizations to the aspects of resource mobilization theory and research. The presentation is timely in the sense that it has been tailored to the essential aspects of planning-programming-budgeting systems.

Donald R. Miller

Burlingame, California
June, 1970

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

SYSTEM CONCEPTS RELEVANT TO MOBILIZATION 2

Concrete Systems 2

RELATED LITERATURE 6

The Organizational Context--A Neglected Concept 6
Parsons
Newman
Gross
Thompson

A THEORY OF RESOURCE MOBILIZATION 20

Diversity of Resources 21
Interorganizational Competition 22
Suborganizational Levels 23
Institutional Level
Managerial Level
Technical Level
Environmental Characteristics 31
Relative Dispersion or Concentration of Alternative Suppliers and Clients
Stability of Environment
Evaluation of Organizational Output
Institutions for Mobilization 35
Symbols of Mobilization 36
Obstacles to Mobilization 37
Summary of Mobilization Theory 38

BUDGETING AND MOBILIZATION 40

Three Aspects of Budgeting 40
Control
Management
Planning
Influencing Factors in Budgeting Activities 42
Suborganizational Levels
Institutional Level
Managerial Level
Technical Level

Technology and Goals
Environmental Factors
PPB, Mobilization and Suborganizational Levels 47

SUMMARY 51

ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS OF RESOURCE MOBILIZATION*

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Introduction

The acquisition of resources (or inputs) is an activity common to all organizations. Mobilizing resources is the most active aspect of resource acquisition. It requires a constant scanning of the environment for resources. Other aspects of resource acquisition, such as legacies and windfalls, are also important, but usually outside the control of incumbent members in an organization.

Resource mobilization is affected by structural factors in organizations and their environments. These variables will provide a focus for our discussion. This subject seems particularly appropriate for research by political scientists. The maneuvering, scheming and strategies used in mobilizing resources are the substance of "politics" as this word is classically defined.

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*This paper represents a part of the research being done on a broader study of resource mobilization. I would like to thank Bertram M. Gross, Michael Springer, Eric Trist and David Warner for reading and commenting on earlier drafts of this paper. Special thanks is also given to the staff of OPERATION PEP for the thorough editing they gave the preliminary manuscript. Their comments greatly improved the paper. Responsibility, however, for any errors in logic or fact is mine.

The first consideration of this paper is an outline of some of the notions from general systems theory which are relevant to mobilization; second, is a review of some of the literature that pertains to or points toward a theory of mobilizing resources; third, is a presentation of a more integrated theory of resource mobilization; and fourth, is an application of this theory to some of the literature in public budgeting.

System Concepts Relevant to Resource Mobilization

Concrete Systems

There are as many "systems" theories as authors writing about systems. It is not the purpose of this paper to select any one "theory" as most correct. Rather, a few of the generally agreed-upon elements in systems theory will be assessed, with a concentration upon the aspects of systems most closely connected with mobilizing resources or procuring "inputs."

Broadly defined, a system "is a set of units with relationships among them."[1] James G. Miller identifies three categories of systems--conceptual systems, abstracted systems and concrete systems. In conceptual systems, symbols such as words or numbers are the basic elements. Relationships between the elements are expressed in consistent symbols. Conceptual systems may or may not be intended to have a formal identity with some empirically observed, concrete system. The elements and their relationships in abstract systems are "abstracted or selected by an observer in the light of his interests." Some elements may be empirically derived, others not. Observers chose and

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[1]James G. Miller, "Living Systems: Basic Concepts," Behavioral Science, X (July, 1965), p. 200.

defined the basic concepts for the convenience of their research.[2]

Concrete systems, Miller's third category, are those in which there is a non-random accumulation of matter and energy, located in a region of physical "time-space," and organized into co-acting, inter-related sub-systems or components.[3] Both the elements and relationships in concrete systems are empirically observable. Figure 1 illustrates the basic elements of a concrete system.

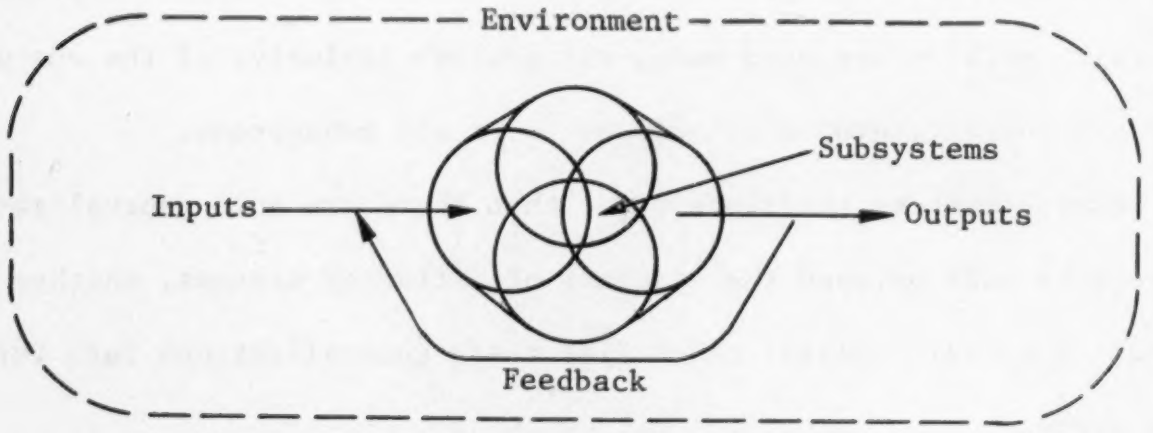

Fig. 1--Elements in a concrete system

A system is distinguished from its non-organized "environment" by the proximity of the units, their similarity, their common fate and the distinct patterning of the units.[4] The "boundaries" are more or less permeable, permitting a flow of inputs or resources from the environment into the system and a flow of outputs or products back into the environment. Such systems are called "open systems." The "state of organization" in open systems may increase, decrease, or remain constant, depending on the relative

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[2] Ibid., pp. 200-202, 204-206.

[3] Ibid., p. 202.

[4] Ibid., p. 203.

flows of inputs and outputs through time. A "feedback" mechanism monitors the flow of outputs and provides needed information when the transformation processes within the system require adjustment.

Located within the system are the subsystems which transform inputs into outputs. The interdependence of these subsystems varies widely from system to system. They can often be examined as "systems" in their own right. In fact, the choice to discuss a particular "level" of a system is usually arbitrary, and depends primarily on the interests of the observer. Once this decision has been made, all systems inclusive of the one under study are suprasystems, and included in it are subsystems.

General systems theorists argue that there are some generalizations that can be made between the elements of different systems, whether biological or social. Miller classifies these generalizations into three broad types.

$I_1 \ldots . I_n$ (Individual)

$T_1 \ldots . T_n$ (Type)

$L_1 \ldots . L_n$ (Level)

Fig. 2--Kinds of system generalizations

Comparisons can be made, first, between individuals (see $I_1 \ldots . I_n$ in Figure 2) within a specific type, e.g., house cats; second, between different types ($T_1 \ldots . T_n$), e.g., cross-species generalizations like cats and frogs; and finally, between different levels ($L_1 \ldots . L_n$), e.g., generalizations from "cell to society."[5]

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[5] Ibid., p. 214.

Miller suggests that cross-system generalizations can be based on three criteria: (1) "recognizing an aspect of two or more systems which have comparable status in those systems;" (2) "hypothesizing a quantitative identity between them;" and (3) "empirically demonstrating that identity within a certain range of error by collecting data on a similar aspect of each of the two or more systems compared."[6]

Thus, Miller concludes:

> A set of observations at one level or type of behaving systems can be associated with findings at another to support generalizations that are far from trivial. It may be possible to use the same conceptual system to represent two quite different sorts of concrete systems, or to make models of them with the same mathematical constructs. It may even be possible to make useful generalizations which apply to all living systems at all levels. Such formal identities should include terms which also state specifically the inter-type and inter-individual disidentities. The identification and confirmation of these formal identities is a matter for empirical study.[7]

It is our contention that the mobilization of resources is an activity common to all systems, at all levels. If any system, whether biological or social, is to maintain a state of "homeostasis" (or self-stabilization), it must keep a flow of resources coming into the system from the external environment. Although there are areas of fruitful comparison between the mobilization activities of biological and social systems, this paper is confined to a discussion of the mobilizing activities of the latter.

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[6] Ibid., p. 215.

[7] Ibid.

Related Literature

The Organizational Context--A Neglected Concept

The concept of mobilizing resources is often discussed, but seldom analyzed. All political scientists recognize the need for governments to find and retain enough resources to continue their operations, but few have systematically discussed the manner in which these resources are obtained.

The work of Harold Lasswell provides an example of some of the earlier analyses of activities related to resource acquisition and mobilization. In his classic book, Politics: Who Gets What, When, and How, he studies the strategies used by political elites "who get the most of what there is to get."[8] He identifies four types of strategy: (1) strategies which manipulate symbols and ideologies to the advantage of the elite; (2) strategies centering on the threat or use of violence; (3) strategies for controlling and rationing the flow of goods and services; and (4) strategies which manipulate specific organizational practices for the achievement of specific goals.

Lasswell's analysis focuses primarily on the struggles of elites for the attainment of such values as deference, safety, or income. Little attention is given to the types of elite behavior that may be associated with certain kinds of organizations. Rather, more attention is given to analyzing the mobilization strategies of individual members of elites and classifying the attributes (i.e., skills, class, personality, or attitude)

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[8]Harold D. Lasswell, Politics: Who Gets What, When, How, Meridian Books (Cleveland, Ohio: The World Publishing Co., 1958), p. 13. First published, 1936.

of these elites, without regard for the organizational context within which they operate. When organizational attributes are taken into consideration, the individual attributes described by Lasswell may be constrained. In other words, the degree to which a given individual will mobilize resources depends not only on his skills, class, personality and attitude, but also on the organizational context in which he is located.

Four social scientists have written very explicitly about mobilizing resources within organizations--Talcott Parsons, a professor of sociology; William H. Newman, a professor of business administration; Bertram M. Gross, a professor of political science; and James D. Thompson, a professor of business administration and sociology. All four writers view the mobilizing of resources as essential to the operation of organizations.

Parsons

In discussing organizations which are goal-oriented, or which have a primary "orientation to the attainment of a special goal,"[9] Talcott Parsons identifies mobilization or procurement of resources as one of the three primary functions of an organization.

> The primary adaptive exigencies of an organization concern the procurement of the resources necessary for it to attain its goal or carry out its function; hence one major field of institutionalization concerns the modes of procurement of these resources. Secondly, the organization will itself have to have institutionalized procedures by which these resources are brought to bear in the concrete processes of goal attainment; and, finally, there will have to be institutional patterns defining and regulating the limits of commitments to this organization as compared with others in which the same persons and other resource controllers are involved....[10]

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[9]Talcott Parsons, Structure and Process in Modern Societies (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1960), p. 17. Italics in original.

[10]Ibid., p. 22.

The development of institutions and procedures for the mobilization of resources is vital to the organization. Resources are not automatically available. They must be acquired in an environment of scarcity.

Some administrators mistakenly assume that resources will be "allocated" (through some invisible hand) among competing demands according to the economic efficiency, and that obstacles to the free transfer of resources from one use to another are not significant. Parsons demonstrated that such assumptions are not realistic. He borrowed from a simplified economic model, based on these assumptions, to analyze some of the factors influencing the mobilization of personnel resources.[11] This model combined a concept of "marginal productivity" from price theory in economics with the concept of "freedom of contract." According to these concepts, an employer retains an employee only as long as the marginal productivity of his work exceeds the marginal costs of his wages, and the employee seeks the employer who will pay the highest wage for his services. The rewards considered important by each party are exhausted by monetary rewards, with either party free to terminate the contract at will. It is also assumed that there are no barriers to the movement of money and people, from one organization to another.

Parsons examines recruitment and employment practices to see how closely they approximate the patterns predicted by this rather narrow model. According to his analysis, business firms engaged in the production of tangible goods approximated this "marginal product-freedom of contract" model most closely. In such firms, non-economic relations between employer and employee are kept at a minimum and the procedures of cost-accounting

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[11]Ibid., pp. 78-86.

can be easily applied to the production process. In order to protect themselves from the uncertainties of the market and changing technologies, workers in such firms organize unions. The unions work to substitute other criteria for hiring and firing than marginal productivity. They emphasize seniority and resist schemes of remuneration based primarily on performance.

The further the function of the organization moves away from the production of tangible commodities for a market, the more employer-employee relations deviate from the purely economic patterns predicted by the model of marginal productivity and freedom of contract. Parsons cites, as an example, the activities of civilian employees in large government bureaucracies. Seniority and tenure are conspicuous as criteria for advancement and pay. He associates the existence of these patterns with the intangibility of the services provided. Also, accurate cost-accounting is more difficult in such situations.

Parsons further noted that non-economic factors were important in executive and professional remuneration. Although business executives were given primarily financial rewards, these rewards were not based directly on productivity. Professionals and executives in non-profit organizations receive lower salaries than executives in profit-making firms. Parsons suggests this is due to the non-monetary satisfactions derived from professional work. A substantial part of their reward is greater job security and the satisfactions derived from performing "public service." Also, fees for professional work are not based on their economic value, but are usually tied to a sliding scale, increasing with the client's ability to pay.

In summary, Parsons identifies four primary factors that will influence the mobilization of personnel resources: (1) the tangibility or intangibility of the product produced by the organization; (2) the desires of the

employees for job security; (3) the number of non-economic relationships among the employer, employee and client; and (4) the importance of non-economic rewards.

Newman

William Newman describes "acquiring resources" as one of the five processes of administration.[12] He defines resource acquisition as "arranging for use by the enterprise the personnel, capital, facilities, and other things or services needed to execute plans." Like Parsons, however, Newman concentrates primarily on the mobilization and retention of personnel resources and only briefly considers how other kinds of resources are mobilized. Two out of three chapters dealing with the acquiring of resources are devoted to a discussion of strategies for finding, training, promoting and rewarding executives. Newman reasons that without competent executives, none of the other needed resources can be acquired.[13]

Conspicuously absent from his discussion on personnel mobilization is any suggestion or strategy on how to acquire these resources from the general environment of organizations. Most of the discussion centers on: how to determine the organizational needs for executive personnel; how to evaluate executives; and how to design programs of promotion and compensation aimed at retaining personnel. Newman recognizes that personnel presently within the company are potentially valuable resources for higher-level executives. Accordingly, he suggests strategies for developing these individuals.

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[12]William H. Newman, Administrative Action (2nd ed., Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), pp. 4-5. The other four processes are planning, organizing, supervising and controlling.

[13]Ibid., p. 325.

No attempt is made to identify general categories of organizations or the peculiar personnel problems associated with any of these categories. Rather than develop a theory to make such distinctions, Newman relies on the exercise of "judgment" in the application of the "principles" he suggests to specific enterprises.

In addition to considerations of personnel recruitment, Newman suggests three other general aspects in the mobilizing process: First, there is a necessary inter-dependence between an enterprise and its input suppliers. Each must depend on the other to perform a vital organizational function. The supplier relies on the producer as a user of its outputs; the producer relies on the supplier for needed inputs. The stronger or more aggressive of the two may find it necessary to strengthen the capabilities of the other so that there will be an adequate supply of materials or an adequate market for products. Newman cites the example of Sears in South America. Sears spent several years developing the capabilities of local suppliers to meet Sears' needs for dependable, periodic deliveries.[14]

Second, the variety of possible relationships between suppliers and producers affects the resource mobilization process. These relationships range from informal agreements to mergers of the two organizations. The most flexible relationship that will still assure a supply of resources is likely to be most satisfactory. The important factors to consider in deciding on the kind of relationship are resources, their scarcity and the reliability of the suppliers.

Third, mobilizing activities differ qualitatively and quantitatively

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[14]Also see Albert O. Hirschman, Development Projects Observed (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1967), for a more extended discussion on developing suppliers and buyers.

at different suborganizational levels, i.e., the kinds of mobilizing activities undertaken at the highest levels of an organization are different in quality and quantity from those at the lower levels. Higher-level executives spend much of their time legitimizing the functions of their organizations within the society, protecting themselves from unfavorable laws, adjusting to changes in demand, or keeping abreast of the mobilizing techniques of the competition. At the lower levels, some of the same processes take place, but with a much narrower scope. Strategies of mobilization often differ qualitatively because lower-level executives do much of their mobilizing within an enterprise, and their outside contacts are with lower levels of other organizations.

Gross

Bertram Gross views "acquiring resources" as one of seven basic performance aspects of organizations or systems.[15] Without resources, no activity can take place in an organization.

> Neither producing output nor investing in the system--at any level of efficiency--is possible without resources that can be used as inputs. These must be obtained from the external environment.[16]

Like Parsons, he explodes the "daydream" that resources flow automatically into the organization. Adequate suppliers are obtained only through carefully planned strategies. "Resources do not come, like obedient slaves, when

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[15]Bertram M. Gross, "What Are Your Organization's Objectives?" Human Relations, XVIII (1965), pp. 195-216; Bertram M. Gross, "The State of the Nation: Social Systems Accounting," in Social Indicators, ed. by Raymond A. Bauer (Boston: The M.I.T. Press, 1966), pp. 245-47. The other six elements are (1) satisfying interests, (2) producing output, (3) efficient use of inputs, (4) investing in the organization, (5) observing codes and (6) behaving rationally.

[16]Gross, Social Indicators, p. 245.

called. They must be mobilized."[17]

Although Parsons and Newman recognize the need to mobilize all types of resources, they emphasize the mobilization of personnel. Gross more thoroughly discusses the processes for mobilizing many types of resources. He identifies three basic types: money, the most general resource because it is exchanged for others as they are available; people; and physical facilities. A series of technical specialties has grown up around the mobilization of each of these types of resource. Accountants, budgeteers and financiers mobilize money; personnel managers mobilize people; and procurement operations mobilize materials.

Gross outlines three major elements in the processes of resource mobilization.[18] (1) "Mobilization logic" focuses on the strategies used to get the primary and most general resources from the environment. Users of this logic concentrate on the acquisition of resources, giving less attention to their later utilization. Often these activities are merely "imaginative probings of the future," explorations to see what resources are available. (2) "Use logic" is "more sober." Resources must be matched with the objectives. Therefore, these calculations are more closely connected with the production or service components of the organization. In short, "fancy justifications" are transformed, through this logic, into concrete programs. (3) "Demobilization" deals with the inverse of the first two, i.e., the disposition of surplus resources. Surpluses are caused by excess mobilization, changes in patterns of utilization, technological obsolescence, or the deterioration of the usefulness of resources through age and wear.

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[17]Bertram M. Gross, The Managing of Organizations (New York: The Free Press, 1964), II, 696.

[18]Ibid., chap. 26

The most difficult aspect of demobilization comes when the surplus is caused by a shift in the goals of the organization and people and resources must be dropped because of this shift.

Thompson

James D. Thompson, in Organizations in Action,[19] provides an analytical framework for a differentiation of the roles of three suborganizational levels in the mobilization processes, the identification of mobilization strategies peculiar to particular technologies and the association of patterns of mobilization with certain characteristics of the environment.

Thompson begins his analysis by describing "open" and "closed" systems. In a closed system, all of the components are contributing to the operation of the system, the system's goals are relatively certain and the effects of actions within the system are fairly well known. In an open system, uncertainty is expected; many unanticipated influences and contingencies affect the system's operation; and many of the significant variables are either unknown or are so numerous and complex that understandings of their interactions are incomplete.

Thompson rejects the idea that complex organizations can be viewed as either open or closed systems. Instead, he argues that "the phenomena associated with open- and closed-system strategies are not randomly distributed through complex organizations, but instead tend to be specialized by location within the organization."[20] He uses Parsons' notion that

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[19]James D. Thompson, Organizations in Action (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1967).

[20]Ibid., p. 10.

organizations can be divided into three distinct suborganizational levels--institutional, managerial and technical--to identify areas of specialization associated with open- or closed-systems. Separations between these levels are qualitatively different from those associated with a simple hierarchy. There is a two-way interaction between levels, with each having the power to interfere with the functioning of the other two.

The institutional level is most "open." It legitimizes the goals and outputs of the organization within the context of the community or society. Interactions with the environment are extensive and the boundary-spanning considerations of input acquisition or output disposal occur under conditions of relatively high uncertainty. Emphasis is on a long-range perspective and flexibility. A corporate board of directors or a school board are examples of the institutional level.

The managerial level serves a mediating role between the institutional and technical levels. Managers adjust and supplement the inputs provided by the institutional level to the more specific needs of the technical level. Both the managerial and institutional levels buffer the technical level from the uncertainties of input acquisition and output disposal in the environment.

The technical level most nearly approximates a "closed" system. The main concern at this level is the coordination of the activities associated with the effective performance of the primary functions of the organization. There is less uncertainty about how inputs will be acquired or how outputs are disposed of, as these matters are handled by the institutional and managerial levels. Time considerations are usually short run and the number of significant variables to be considered are fewer than at the other two suborganizational levels. Thompson further notes that "the primary

exigencies to which the technical suborganization is oriented are those imposed by the nature of the technical task, such as the materials which must be processed and the kinds of cooperation of different people required to get the job done effectively."[21] For these reasons, the type of technologies used at the technical level, the materials or persons processed and the availability of these materials or persons will affect the degree of uncertainty in producing the desired outputs at this level.

Thompson classifies technologies into three loose groups: "Long-linked,"--those which involve a sequential series of steps; "mediating"--those which bring parties together for communication or shared risk; and "intensive"--those in which a single client or object is treated by a number of specialties, and the state of the client or object determines the order and extent of actions taken by the specialties. Each of these technologies will influence resource mobilizing, but primarily at the technical level within the organization.

Long-linked technologies are usually quite sophisticated, i.e., there is considerable understanding about the relationships among the important variables. Inputs coming into such technologies can often be standardized and are relatively well known. Managerial levels find or develop suppliers to provide such inputs at the best terms and deliver them to the technical level. Interactions between the technical and managerial levels, or between the technical level and the environment are often routine and standardized.

Mediating technologies link clients or customers who wish to be interdependent, e.g., telephone utilities or insurance companies. The technological problem of this type of organization centers around attempts

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[21] Ibid.

to standardize its operations and assure participants that transactions will be handled in comparable ways. The "bureaucratic techniques of categorization and impersonal application of rules" have been widely employed in such organizations.

In intensive technologies, understandings about the relationships among variables are uncertain. There is no assurance that the desired result will follow from the addition of particular new resources. Further, each task is often unique and defies standardization. Therefore, series of "mutual adjustments" must be made between the technical level, the environment and the higher levels of the organization. Each operation is "customized." Such processes place heavy burdens on the coordinating capacities of the organization, as each activity requires the operation of an extensive communication network.

Assessments of the performance of the technical level are also associated with the type and sophistication of the technology. Criteria range from economic efficiency for the long-linked technologies to evaluations based on the opinions of reference groups for technologies which are more intensive or less sophisticated. The more difficult assessments of performance are, the more difficult it is for resource suppliers to demand specific outputs for specific inputs.

The characteristics of the environment of the organization also have an effect on how resources are mobilized. Each organization occupies a "life-space" or "domain" within the general societal context. This domain consists of the needs or demands met by the organization, the population served and the services or goods provided. No organization provides or manufactures all of the components it needs to meet the demands it serves in its domain. All are on some point of an input-output chain relative to

many of their resources. Hospitals must rely on pharmaceutical firms to provide drugs, laundries to clean linens, medical schools to train physicians and many other suppliers which provide hundreds of other products and services. "Hence the organization's domain identifies the points at which the organization is dependent on inputs from the environment."[22] The mobilization of resources from its domain is one of the primary political concerns of organizations.[23]

Domains are mutually defined by the people within the organization and sectors of the "task environment." The task environment is that portion of the "general environment" which is relevant or potentially relevant to goal setting or goal attainment for the organization. It is always multifaceted, complex and unique to each organization. Even in the most totalitarian general enviornments there are a large number of possible arrangements for an organization's task environment.

Dependence on any one element in the task environment is seen by Thompson as the inverse of power. An organization is dependent in proportion to its needs for a particular resource and the dispersion or concentration of the capacity of suppliers in the environment to provide the resource. Similarly, the dependence of the organization is influenced by the relative dispersion or concentration of demands for its outputs.

The extent to which sources of input (or suppliers) and output (or clients) coincide places a further constraint on the activities of the organization. When input and output sources overlap, evaluations of output relative to specific inputs are more probable. Promises made in obtaining

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[22] Ibid., p. 27.

[23] Anthony Downs' concept of "bureau territoriallity" is similar to the concept of domain. See Anthony Downs, Inside Bureaucracy (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1967), pp. 212-13.

inputs must be honored in the production of outputs.

Organizations will try to manage their dependence on any one resource. Efforts will be made to maintain or develop alternative suppliers (and clients). If a critical resource is produced by few or undependable suppliers, efforts will be made to reduce dependence and uncertainty in obtaining this resource by increasing the number of suppliers or incorporating producers into the organization through such arrangements as informal agreements, contracts, mergers and others.

In summary, Thompson's analysis seems to indicate that the extent and scope of mobilization activities will be influenced by such factors as suborganizational levels in the organization, types of technologies used within the technical suborganization and the relative dependence of the organization on the suppliers and clients in the task environment.

In the next section, several ideas from the writers just reviewed will serve as a starting point for developing a more explicit theory of resource mobilization. The ideas which will be drawn from most heavily are Parsons' suggestions of the effects on mobilization of the tangibility of output, the importance of non-economic considerations and the qualitative differences among "suborganizational levels" in organizations; Newman's discussion of the effects of the relationship between supplier and producer on mobilization; Gross' identification of three qualitatively different types of mobilization activity; and Thompson's specific application of the Parsonian concept of suborganizational levels in organizations, functioning, his identification of the role of different types of technologies in mobilization and his concepts of organizational domain and the influence on mobilization strategies of dependence on any one supplier within that domain.

A Theory of Resource Mobilization

Parsons' formal model of personnel procurement, based on the assumptions of economic maximization, highlights many non-economic aspects of mobilizing personnel. A much broader model--one which covers more resources, is not confined to maximizing narrow economic goals, and which considers a variety of environmental conditions--is needed to analyze more fully the mobilization processes of organizations. Some of the more important elements needed to develop a theory of resource mobilization are outlined in this section.

It is assumed that people within organizations pursue activities which will perpetuate (not maximize) the existence of their organizations. This proposition is unlike the "self-interest" assumption used by Anthony Downs[24] to explain the actions of politicians and bureaucrats. The proposed scheme views the organization as a system organized to satisfy or protect organizational goals or values, rather than a location for individual actors to maximize their own goals or values. Thus, variables classifying organizational characteristics, not the characteristics of the personalities or organizational actors, are emphasized. Individuals may attempt to modify the performance of the organization to conform more closely with their own values, but the total output of the system matches the values of no individual perfectly. When people do not act to perpetuate their organization, it is assumed that their behavior is "irrational," that the functions previously performed by the organization are no longer demanded, or that its primary functions have been taken over by some other organization.

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[24]Anthony Downs, An Economic Theory of Democracy (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), and Downs, Inside Bureaucracy.

The following discussion deals with the diversity and number of different resources, differential abilities among organizations to mobilize resources, the characteristics of resource mobilization associated with the various suborganizations within an organization, the effects of different types of technology and their degree of sophistication on the mobilization processes, the effects of certain environmental characteristics on mobilization, the language, symbols and institutions that have grown up around mobilization activities, and some of the more general obstacles to successful mobilization by organizations.

Diversity of Resources

Different strategies are used to mobilize different kinds of resources. An appreciation of the complexity of resource mobilization can be gained by merely categorizing the resources necessary for sustained organizational activity. In the most general sense, resources can be classified into two categories: human and non-human. The diversity within each of these classifications is tremendous, ranging from pipe-fitters to Presidential speech writers in human resources, and from iron ore to space capsules in non-human resources.

Both Parsons and Gross note that the most general resource in a monetized society is money. Gross cautions, however, that money is only a "hunting license" with which to seek the concrete goods or services needed for organizational performance.[25] Even if an organization has sufficient financing, it must still find sources to supply the people and materials it

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[25]Gross, Managing of Organizations, p. 701.

desires. Certain resources may not be available at any price, or the terms of acquisition may include quantities and/or qualities that are not acceptable. Further, many of the inducements to essential but scarce personnel are non-monetary. Their reasons for coming to or remaining with an organization may be entirely unrelated to the salary.

Interorganizational Competition

Many writers have observed that some organizations are able to mobilize more resources than others. C. Wright Mills argued that economic, political and military organizations were able to mobilize most of the resources in the United States during the 1950's. In The Power Elite, he wrote:

> Within American society, major national power now resides in the economic, the political, and the military domains. Other institutions seem off to the side of modern history, and, on occasion, duly subordinated to these. No family is as directly powerful in national affairs as any major corporation; no church is as directly powerful in the external biographies of young men in America today as the military establishment; no college is as powerful in the shaping of momentous events as the National Security Council. Religious, educational, and family institutions are not autonomous centers of national power; on the contrary, these decentralized areas are increasingly shaped by the big three, in which developments of decisive and immediate consequence now occur.[26]

Bertrand de Jouvenel has written that the organizations which control the allocation of research and development funds in an advanced country such as the United States will control the major allocations of resources in the future. He laments that four-fifths (or more) of the R & D funds in the

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[26]C. Wright Mills, The Power Elite (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 6.

United States are used for military or related purposes.[27]

If these arguments are accepted, it follows that the success of an organization in mobilizing resources depends on the relationships of the organization to the existing power structures. Some organizations will get disproportionate shares. Mills identified the organizations which did best in the 1950's; other writers may suggest a different set of organizations for the 1960's and 1970's. Daniel Bell[28] and John Kenneth Galbraith,[29] for instance, suggest that certain technocratic professionals and the institutions with which they are associated, i.e., universities and consulting firms, are gaining control over ever greater shares of available resources.

Suborganizational Levels

Competition for resources occurs at all suborganizational levels. Mobilization activities are different within the various sublevels indicated by Parsons.[30] For instance, secretaries conduct campaigns for new desks and electric typewriters; departmental managers map strategies to increase their

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[27]Bertrand de Jouvenel, "Technology as a Means," Values and the Future, ed. by Kurt Baier and Nicholas Rescher (New York: The Free Press, 1969), pp. 225, 230.

[28]Daniel Bell, "The Post-Industrial Society," in Technology and Social Change, ed. by Eli Ginzberg (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), pp. 44-59.

[29]John Kenneth Galbraith, "Technology, Planning, and Organizations," in Values and the Future, pp. 353-67.

[30]Parsons, Structure and Process, pp. 66-67. See Daniel Katz and Robert L. Kahn, The Social Psychology of Organizations (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1966), pp. 39-47, and Robert N. Anthony, Planning and Control Systems: A Framework for Analysis (Boston: Division of Research, Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University, 1965), pp. 1-23, for alternative formulations of organizational subsystems.

appropriations; school boards make plans to raise the tax levies. The more regular and intense mobilization activities, however, occur at the institutional and managerial levels.[31]

Institutional Level

Mobilization activities are continuous and of primary concern at the institutional level. At this level the system is most "open" to environmental influences. It is a basic function for the institutional level to provide linkages which span the boundaries between the organization and its environment.

Beginning with Gross' concept of "mobilization logic"[32] and Thompson's concept of "organizational surveillance"[33] five broad characteristics of the mobilization process at the institutional level emerge.

1. Explicating the goals and values of the organization and justifying the use of scarce resources for the achievement of these objectives. Murray Edelman recognized the problem of mobilizers at the institutional level when he observed that political institutions must "serve as a powerful means of expression for mass public[s] and . . . convey benefits to particular groups . . ."[34] This proposition need not be restricted to political institutions. All organizations must explicate and justify their goals and values and it is at the institutional level that these activities are the most frequent. If leaders at the institutional level fail in this twofold task,

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[31]Thompson, Organizations in Action, pp. 148-49.

[32]Gross, Managing of Organizations, pp. 702-712.

[33]Thompson, Organizations in Action, pp. 151-56.

[34]Murray Edelman, The Symbolic Uses of Politics (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1964), p. 2.

they face expulsion or serious challenge to their authority from discontented elements of the organization or its environment.

2. Wide scanning of the environment for new or alternative resources. Strategies on such matters as which resource to use, whether to develop new suppliers, when to rely on current inventories, or when to convert presently-held assets to other uses are formulated and carried out in a scanning process.

3. Adjusting the values, goals and internal operations of the organization to changes and contingencies in the environment. Existing or new values must be matched to the changing resource base of the organization. These adjustments are often painful because they require the "demobilization" of entrenched personnel or traditional sources of supply. Constraints and contingencies often take the form of restrictions on the use of certain resources, or unpredictable circumstances which interrupt the flow of a vital resource. It is one of the primary functions of the institutional level to buffer the managerial and technical levels from some of the more severe uncertainties rooted in these constraints and contingencies.

4 and 5. Emphasizing a relatively long-range point of view and maintaining flexibility. Considerations at the institutional level tend to deal with matters which are not of immediate or short-range concern. Rather, concern is focused on the definition of the policy guidelines or long-range objectives. In such deliberations, efforts are made to keep commitments to resource suppliers flexible. Flexibility in these agreements (whether the agreements are informal, written contracts, ad hoc relationships, or mergers) gives an organization room to adjust to changes in its goals or environment. The degree of flexibility in these arrangements will be influenced by the need for a particular resource, and the stability of the environment within which the organization operates.

Managerial Level

Managers serve a dual mediating role, spanning the "boundaries" between the institutional and technical suborganizations and between the technical level and the environment. Parsons notes that they must come "to terms with . . . experts, customers, and resource people who are in a position (within limits) to exact their own terms independently."[35] Thus, managers, like executives at the institutional level, also engage in the broadest kinds of resource mobilization. But they can spend a smaller portion of their time in long-range mobilization activities because of the demands for the everyday operation of the enterprise. In Gross' terms, the managerial level is where "utilization logic" tempers the enthusiasm of the "mobilization logic" of the institutional level executives.[36] If not, surplus or unusable resources accumulate within the organization.

Managerial level executives, like those at the institutional level, have the function of "expressing the needs of the mass public" and "conveying benefits to specific groups." In order to effectively carry out this function, their resource mobilization proposals must be more specific than those emanating from the institutional level. The symbolic justifications managers use to obtain resources reflect the narrower scope of their mobilization activities. These justifications are usually tied to a shorter and more specific planning framework and concentrate on adding increments to present programs. Gross lists a few examples of managerial level strategies: "It would add a little to past expenditures." "It is needed to keep up."

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[35]Parsons, Structure and Process, pp. 68-69.

[36]Gross, Managing of Organizations, pp. 702-714.

"It would pay for itself." "It can be afforded."[37]

Technical Level

Members of the technical level have much less flexibility in the selection of the goals they pursue and fewer choices among alternative resources. The primary task within the technical level is the coordination of its technical processes, rather than the boundary-spanning tasks of adjustment with the environment that are performed by the other two suborganizations.[38] With many of the inputs provided for the technical level almost "automatically," and the major problems of output disposal taken care of by the other levels, the operations of the technical level often approach those described in "closed" systems. In such a situation, the planning is usually short range, and concentrates on urging the managerial level to provide enough resources to keep the technical process functioning smoothly. Changes in the resources used or the goals sought are relatively small and incremental in nature.

There are four major factors which influence mobilization at the technical level. (It should be noted that these factors also affect mobilizing at the managerial and institutional levels. But the primary impact seems to be at the technical level.)

1. The type of technology used within the organization influences the resource mobilization process.[39] Most of the influences are related to the degree of standardization in mobilizing each type of technology allows. In

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[37] Ibid., pp. 709-711.

[38] Thompson, Organizations in Action, p. 81.

[39] See discussion supra, pp. 16-17, for more detailed definitions of these types of technology. Also see ibid., pp. 15-18.

a long-linked technical process (one which involves a sequential series of steps), the inputs from each step in the process must be relatively standardized. The primary task in mobilizing under such circumstances is to find adequate and timely supplies. This task is often very difficult even though the mobilizer may know exactly what he is seeking. Organizations using mediating technologies (those which bring parties together for purchases, shared risk or communication), often have more latitude for innovative mobilization. The need to deal with customers on a personal basis forces a more flexible organizational structure. Standardized resources and processes must be supplemented with more flexible arrangements because of the need to adjust to client demands. Intensive technologies (those in which a single client or object is treated by a number of specialties) resist standardization because the object being changed influences the application of the techniques included in the technology. In such custom technologies, opportunities for mobilization are greater than in the other categories. Administration must be relatively localized, and a great deal of discretion exercised by the technical experts in defining the work to be done and the methods for accomplishing the work.

2. The sophistication of the technology, i.e., the degree of understanding about the relationships among the significant variables in an organization's technical processes, influences the mobilization of resources. If the understanding of these relationships is extensive (and the goals sought are relatively certain), evaluation of the activities of the technical level by the managerial suborganization can be based on tests of economic efficiency. Control and the mobilization of alternative resources is often shifted to the managerial level under such conditions. When the understanding of the relationships among variables is less developed, evaluations of

performance are based on less precise criteria. Instrumental tests are used to evaluate whether or not the desired state is achieved, rather than attempting to tie the input of certain resources to particular outcomes. If the technology is even less sophisticated, evaluations may be based on the opinions of reference groups of the technical specialists. Accreditation by professional groups, the number of professional papers published and other indirect measures become surrogates for evaluations of the actual performance of the technical personnel.

In summary, as the sophistication of the technology decreases, the more difficult it becomes for groups outside the technical suborganization to evaluate its performance. Less precise methods of evaluation must be used. Consequently, there is a decrease in the degree of control outside groups can have over the operations and requests of the technical level. This loss of control can work both ways in the mobilization process. In some cases, the technical level can get more resources by claiming very broad benefits of their work and there are no objective criteria to dispute them. It should further be noted that the managerial suborganization often joins the technical level in making these claims. On the other hand, Wildavsky notes that congressional appropriators often cut intangible services because the effects of the cut cannot be identified.[40]

3. High rates of change in the technical processes facilitate the mobilization of new resources to achieve the same or even new goals.[41] A

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[40]Aaron Wildavsky, The Politics of Budgetary Process (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1964), pp. 103-104.

[41]Rufus P. Browning, "Innovative and Noninnovative Decision Processes in Government Budgeting," in Public Budgeting and Finance, ed. by Robert T. Golembiewski (Itasca, Ill.: F. E. Peacock Publishing, Inc., 1968), pp. 134-38.

classic example is in the field of mental health. As research improves the knowledge about therapeutic techniques, the custodial function of mental institutions is challenged. Although all institutions have not adopted therapeutic orientations, the possibility is open to them. Thus, the power to influence the managerial and institutional levels from the technical level is greatly enhanced by a rapidly changing technology.

4. Professionalism and unionism in the technical suborganization influence mobilization. Finding new techniques, suggesting work loads and comparisons with other organizations are facilitated through professional meetings, professional publications and the union bargaining. Professional and union organizations give members of the technical suborganization sources of information and standards which can assist them in the mobilization of resources from other parts of the organization or the environment, independent of the institutional or managerial suborganizations. Rufus Browning argued that in a welfare agency he studied, the main sources of innovation and new ideas were the literature and meetings of the various professions in the agency. "Every one of the [welfare] department's requests for new programs for the present biennium [was found] in the professional literature."[42] He summarized his argument noting that "by generating policy alternatives and setting standards, professions may have an immense impact on an agency's ability to maintain and raise its aspirations; therefore on its budget; therefore on public policies realized through the budget."[43]

None of the characteristics attributed above to one or another

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[42] Ibid., p. 139. For full discussion see pp. 138-42.

[43] Ibid., p. 142.

suborganization resides exclusively in that level. For instance, many managerial groups are highly professionalized, or industry-wide associations perform many of the same functions as professions or unions. It is suggested, however, that there are definite concentrations of the characteristics corresponding to institutional, managerial and technical levels of organization.

The recruitment of personnel provides an illustration of the varying patterns of mobilization associated with the institutional, managerial and technical suborganizations. The criteria for employment usually become more subjective as one moves from the technical level to the managerial and institutional levels.[44] Understandings about the relationships between the actions of the personnel and the objectives to be accomplished become more vague. At the technical level, more objective criteria often can be applied, especially if the technology is relatively sophisticated. Objective written examinations are fairly effective for selecting qualified personnel. Where intangible services are produced by the individual, the technology is unsophisticated, or there is a high degree of uncertainty in the goals sought, there is a tendency to rely on reference group evaluations of the candidate, such as "formal certification," or personal acquaintance with the prospective employee.

Environmental Characteristics

Thompson identified two general characteristics of the environment which significantly affect the autonomy of the organization--(1) the

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[44] Newman, Administrative Action, p. 326.

relative dispersion or concentration of alternative suppliers and clients in the environment and (2) the relative stability of the task environment.[45] There are several aspects of these two characteristics which are of direct relevance to a theory of resource mobilization.

Relative Dispersion or Concentration of Alternative Suppliers and Clients

There are a number of possible structures for supplying inputs and outputs, all of which have a significant effect on mobilization. As pointed out in the literature on imperfect competition,[46] there are a number of possible relationships between a supplier and a buyer. Let us assume that the environment is stable. There can be many or few suppliers, and many or few buyers, the combination of which will have an influence on mobilization activities. For instance, if there are many suppliers and few buyers (oligopsony), the buyer will be able to drive the harder bargain. If there are few suppliers and many buyers (oligopoly), the suppliers will be the more autonomous of the two sides in the transaction. When there are few buyers and few suppliers, mobilization often becomes a matter of personalized bargaining, with the more powerful organizations gaining the favored sources of supply. With many buyers and many sellers, a state of "pure competition" exists and no organization will be able to affect the market price.

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[45]Thompson, Organizations in Action, pp. 70-73.

[46]Edward Chamberlin, The Theory of Monopolistic Competition (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1939); P. J. D. Wiles, Price, Cost and Output (2nd ed. rev.; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1961).

Stability of the Environment

The stability of the environment must also be considered. If the environment is very stable, information on alternative resources is more complete. Experience will have shown which suppliers are most reliable and agreements on terms of the exchange will be enshrined in custom, regardless of the number of suppliers. In an environment characterized by many shifting elements, knowledge about resources will be less precise, making it inevitable that many agreements will be made which are based on inaccurate notions of supply or demand.

Evaluation of Organizational Output

Besides the number of suppliers, their concentration and the relative stability of the task environment, the mobilization of resources from the environment will be influenced by evaluations of an organization's output by both suppliers and clients. This factor is sometimes treated in discussions of "feedback."[47] If an exchange is a simple monetary transaction, evaluation by the supplier is likely to end when it is discovered that the check does not bounce. But in situations where the resource supplier is in a position likely to be affected by the quality of the organization's output (as a legislature is when it allocates funds to a line agency), evaluations are more thorough.

There are three aspects to the influence of suppliers evaluating the output of the organization. First, when the sources of input (suppliers) and demand for output (clients) are not the same, there is often less

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[47]Katz and Kahn, Social Psychology, p. 28.

opportunity for close scrutiny of the utilization of resources after they enter the organization. This often allows the strategies and justifications used in mobilizing resources to diverge from the actual patterns of resource utilization. But, when sources of input and output converge, the organization must come much closer to producing what it has promised. This is particularly significant in intensive technologies, where the object being treated or processed determines the technical processes to be applied. Evaluation is continuous and feedback times are relatively short. Schools and private medical practices are excellent illustrations for this case.

Second, the level of sophistication in the technical process and the certainty of the goals sought will greatly influence the kinds of evaluation possible. In situations where the technology is uncertain, but the goals are clear, the strategy of the organization may be to show, in some way, how every action it takes helps realize the desired goals. For example, a school district will try to prove that every program helps create law-abiding, self-sustaining citizens. Where both the goals and the technology are uncertain, the organization faces an unsettling task. In such situations, the organization often defines the goals, "sells" the clients or patrons on the desirability of these goals, and then proceeds to show how their programs are achieving these ends. This is a very chancy environment for organizations and the mortality rates are high.

A final aspect of evaluation is related to the complexity of an organization's output mix. If the mix is very complex and resources are added at irregular and overlapping intervals, it is impossible to identify the impact of any one resource increment. Evaluation by suppliers, or anyone else for that matter, is difficult and the organization may exercise greater discretion in how it uses any single resource.

In summary, the diversity or concentration of sources of input, the relative stability or shifting of the environment which provides these sources, the degree of convergence among sources on input and output, and the complexity of the output mix all influence the patterns of mobilization by the organization. The manipulation of these variables by an organization can help it reduce its dependency on any one sigment of its environment, or increase the resources it is able to mobilize.

Institutions for Mobilization

There are a number of institutions within organizations that have developed specifically for the mobilization of resources. They are located at all levels of the organization, with concentrations in the managerial and institutional suborganizations. In fact, the institutional level is primarily occupied with boundary-spanning activities of input acquisition and output disposal.

The more technical and specialized institutions for mobilization are staff agencies assigned to the managerial and institutional levels. Budget, personnel and procurement divisions are classic examples at the managerial level. It is significant that the resources obtained by these agencies are primarily for the use of the technical level. The resources of the managerial and institutional levels are less homogeneous and more difficult to handle through standardized methods.

At the technical level, supervisors submit requests restricted to segments of the production process, with the managerial staffs aggregating these requests into comprehensive "budgets." The quality of these aggregations is influenced by the sophistication of the technologies used at the

technical level and the stability of the environment.

Symbols of Mobilization

Each organization, and often each unit within an organization, uses a "specialized" series of symbols to justify and support their claims for resources. Government agencies, for example, justify their budgets in terms of broad benefits and low costs; business organizations justify in terms of profits and growth. In budget and personnel offices, specialized languages have become an institutionized part of the mobilization process. Professional organizations have grown up around both of these functions and efforts have been made to standardize many of their symbols.

The symbols used at each suborganizational level vary. Boards of education and the professional lobbyists for education avoid technical (and often confining language) and prefer to couch their justifications for resources in politically acceptable terms such as "War on Poverty," rather than seeking "general aid to education," a phrase which attracts opposition.[48] Managers and superintendents surround their budget requests with symbols of the goals of the organization and promises for improving the achievement of these goals. They sometimes use technical jargon to cover fuzzy or controversial objectives. On the technical level, justifications are much narrower. Particularly when the technology is unsophisticated or the goals of the technical level unclear, objectives can be clouded by specialized jargon or exaggerated claims of benefits can be made.

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[48]Eugene Eidenberg and Roy D. Morey, An Act of Congress: The Legislative Process and the Making of Education Policy (New York: W. W. Norton, 1969), pp. 78-80, 87, 90-91.

Obstacles to Mobilization

Obstacles to the mobilization of resources may be classified broadly into five groups: (1) norms and values which restrict uses of a resource; (2) preferences and values of personnel; (3) competition from other organizations (or individuals); (4) a scarcity of resources; and (5) physical or technological characteristices of the resource. These categories are not exhaustive or mutually exclusive. Some of them have been covered in part in earlier sections. However, their critical importance to mobilization deserves further attention.

Such problems as: the restriction of financial resources because of high risk, moral codes prohibiting the use of certain resources (e.g., the use of chemical mace by police or the use of a central data bank by the personnel offices in the federal government), a lack of sympathy on the part of significant resource controllers with the goals of the organization (e.g., Congressional censure of the Office of Economic Opportunity through reducing its appropriations), or the unwillingness of personnel to live in certain cities or climates are examples of norm and value obstacles.

The number of competitors and the scarcity of the resources are also closely interrelated. Competition becomes more keen as alternative resources become fewer and a particular resource becomes more critical to the competing organizations.

Some resources are available only in very large units or quantities, so that it is either too abundant or too scarce. Other resources, such as personnel for executive positions or specialists in unsophisticated technical processes, are hard to mobilize because they are non-homogeneous and their quality is difficult to evaluate.

Strategies for overcoming these obstacles are qualitatively different. In the first two groupings, strategies often involve the manipulation of verbal symbols. Further, adjustments in the values and functions of an organization are often necessary before certain critical resources loosen up. These obstacles and their associated strategies appear to be more basic to mobilization than those in the other groups and are usually associated with the institutional levels of the organization. In categories three and four, there are a range of strategies. On the one hand, organizations will build the capacity to produce a critical resource within the organization or make arrangements to merge (or otherwise cooperate) with particularly successful competitors. On the other hand, attempts will be made to switch to alternative and more plentiful resources or to eliminate a competitor. These strategies are associated with both the managerial and institutional levels, but it seems that most of them originate at the managerial level. Strategies under the last category are primarily technical level problems. These strategies include efforts to smooth out "lumps" in the quantity or quality of resources by improving technology or lines of supply. Such technological problems are handled almost exclusively by the technical level, with the managerial level participating more actively in logistical adjustments.

Summary of Mobilization Theory

Several tentative propositions summarize the theory of resource mobilization. Organizations must have resources to perpetuate themselves. Some of these resources are unsolicited legacies or windfalls, but most must be mobilized from the general environment because of the scarcity, disorder and

dispersion of resources in that environment. The resources mobilized, as well as the outputs produced, represent a step in the sequence of political (or more broadly, societal) processes which distribute goods and services among competing demands. The values (or preferences) of the people within an organization as to how these goods and services should be distributed and used are realized or frustrated according to their success in mobilizing resources.

Resource mobilization occurs at all suborganizational levels of organizations, but mobilization activities differ qualitatively at the various levels. The amount of time devoted to mobilization is greater in the institutional and managerial levels than the technical level. However, mobilization activity will be influenced at the technical level as the technology used becomes more intensive and less sophisticated.

The more specialized institutions and languages of mobilization are concentrated at the managerial level. Even so, most decisions concerning basic changes in patterns of resource mobilization are made at the institutional level, with the managerial and technical levels concentrating on more incremental changes.

Finally, an organization, or any sub-unit within it, decreases its dependence on any single element of its environment (1) the more numerous its sources of input, (2) the more widely separated it sources of input and output and (3) the more complex its output mix. An unstable or shifting environment will disturb established patterns of mobilization, and will allow more innovative mobilizing (unless the environment is too unstable to support organizational activity).

Budgeting and Mobilization

Three Aspects of Budgeting

For Allen Schick, a consultant on budgeting at Brookings Institution, "budgeting always has been conceived as a process for systematically relating the expenditures of funds to the accomplishment of planned objectives."[49] But, as he and others point out, there are several aspects of budgeting, each requiring different methods of relating expenditures to objectives.[50] To facilitate the analysis of these various relationships, three aspects of budgeting systems are discernible--control, management and planning.

Control

According to Schick, budget orientation in the United States was first focused on control aspects. As a result, accounting, auditing, honesty and propriety received major emphasis. Budgeteers presented their documents under object classifications and spent the major portion of their time controlling the number of personnel in an agency, placing restrictions on the transfer of funds, standardizing requisition procedures and formulating travel regulations. Charles G. Dawes, the first director of the Bureau of the Budget (BOB), summed up this "non-policy" orientation when he wrote

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[49]Allen Schick, "The Road to PPB: The Stages of Budget Reform," Public Administration Review, XXVII (March, 1967), p. 244. Much of the following discussion is based on this article and an article by Bertram M. Gross, "The New Systems Budgeting," Public Administration Review, XXIX (March/April, 1969), pp. 113-37.

[50]See especially Anthony, Planning and Control Systems for an alternative formulation of Schick's aspects of budgeting.

that "unlike cabinet officers, it [the BOB] is concerned with no question of policy, save that of economy and efficiency."[51]

Management

During the thirties and forties, the programs of government became more numerous, complex and less suspect in the eyes of the public. More emphasis was given to improving the quality and efficiency of government, i.e., the management aspects of budgeting. Significantly, the BOB changed from a small backward-looking agency in the Treasury, to an expanded management arm of the President in a newly-created executive office. The emphasis was on coordinating the work of the government, not guarding against impropriety or dishonesty.

Planning

A number of factors, such as the increasingly complex environment of government, the long lead-times characteristic of many hardware and capital investments and the development of new informational systems and evaluation technologies, have pressed government budgeteers toward a planning orientation. As with the change from a control to a management orientation, budgeting functions are being pushed higher in the hierarchies of organizations and budgeteers are becoming involved in policy discussions of a more basic nature. They began to devote their primary efforts to multi-year plans, survey present and alternative resources and their adequacy for achieving desired ends and to concentrate on the objectives to be fulfilled rather than the work programs to accomplish these objectives.

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[51]Quoted in Schick, "Road to PPB," p. 248.

These three aspects of budgeting--control, management and planning--fit neatly into the framework outlined in the mobilization theory of budgeting, with one exception. Schick suggests that these three aspects are competing processes with different "mixes" of the three in each organization. As one orientation expands, others contract. He hopes to find a way to achieve a balance of these functions at the central level.[52] Further, they are carried out "with no neat division of functions among the various participants."[53] In the theory of resource mobilization, it is argued that while there may not be neat divisions of these functions, there will be concentrations of each of these processes within the various sub-organizations of an organization.

Influencing Factors in Budgeting Activities

Although there are some activities associated with all three aspects of budgeting at each suborganizational level, there are concentrations of the planning aspects at the institutional level, of the management aspects at the managerial level and of the control aspects at the technical level. Further, the characteristics of the control, management and planning activities will be significantly influenced by the level at which the budgeting is performed in the organization. Finally, the theory of resource mobilization indicates that the processes of budgeting are influenced by the characteristics of the environment and the type and sophistication of the technology used at the technical level.

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[52] Ibid., p. 245.

[53] Ibid., p. 244.

Suborganizational Levels

Institutional Level. The mobilizing of resources was defined as those purposive activities aimed at bringing resources into an organization. This is a complex process which involves the interrelationships among such activities as the formulating of goals, maintaining and developing resources and justifying the use of these resources for the goals which have been chosen. By definition, then, the mobilization of resources involves activities which span the boundaries of an organization and take place under circumstances of relative uncertainty concerning goals and resources. Mobilization activity of the broadest type, as indicated in the previous section, is concentrated at the institutional suborganization (e.g., the boards of directors) or organizations.

The planning aspects of budgeting identified by Schick have a great deal in common with the activities of the institutional level of organizations. He states that a planning orientation

> ...focuses on the broadest range of issues: What are the long-range goals and policies of the government and how are these related to particular expenditure choices? What criteria should be used in appraising the requests of the agencies? Which programs should be initiated or terminated, and which expanded or curtailed?[54]

He further notes that planning is future-oriented and requires information systems and personnel which can evaluate organizational objectives, not just the programs, and relate them to the environment. Activities of this type are concentrated at the institutional level.

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[54] Ibid., p. 345.

Managerial Level. Schick contrasted the activities of the management and planning orientations by stating the main concern of each aspect. A management orientation asks, "What methods should be used?"; a planning orientation asks, "What activities should be authorized?"[55] In the same way, mobilization and budgeting processes are not as broad in scope at the managerial level as at the institutional level. There is still considerable planning, but this planning is shorter range (usually limited to the next two fiscal years), requires fewer interorganization interactions, and changes in programs tend to be relatively more incremental and less comprehensive. Programs may be evaluated from the "bottom up," but only as they relate to the accomplishment of the organization's goals, not the goals of the community or society, as is often the case at the institutional level.

The primary emphasis at the managerial level is upon "programming approved goals drawn in broader strokes by the institutional levels."[56] Managerial mobilizing is focused on finding resources of the proper quantity and quality to complete these projects and activities. Usually, this involves the conversion of dollars (which were mobilized through the broader scanning of the environment by the institutional level) into the concrete resources needed to accomplish the goals of the organization, i.e., people, buildings, typewriters and machinery. Budgeting at this level groups resources into functional, activity, or "performance" budgets, with an attempt to combine the resources in the most efficient and effective ways for the achievement of the goals stated more broadly at the instititutional level.

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[55] Ibid., p. 252.

[56] Ibid., p. 244.

Technical Level. The control aspects of budgeting are concentrated at the technical level. The core of these aspects deals with "binding operating officials to the policies and plans set by their superiors."[57] In modern practice, this involves more than keeping accurate accounts of input-costs and controlling the number of personnel in an agency. It also includes very careful evaluations of the effectiveness of the technical level of the organization in achieving specific goals. The scope of these evaluations is usually quite narrow and backward-looking, focusing on economic efficiency. The concepts of cost accountants are particularly relevant in these evaluations because of the relatively few variables and the relatively high agreement on the goal being sought.

Any changes in policy or process are likely to be incremental and aimed at improving efficiency. Further, such deliberations are scattered throughout units within the technical level, with each unit evaluating its own effectiveness in the context of that unit, rather than in the context of the whole organization. Resource mobilization is confined to inter-unit struggles and bargaining, occurring within the organization. Few resources are mobilized from outside the organization.

The personnel doing "control budgeting" tend to be part of the technical level of budgeting staffs. Even though there is considerable accounting and auditing at the institutional and managerial suborganizations, the intent of this activity is generally to keep the managers and directors honest, not guide them in their policy decisions.

Technology and Goals

There are two factors that will substantially affect the quality of

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[57] Ibid.

budgeting processes at all suborganizational levels, but particularly at the technical level. The first factor is the sophistication of the technology (i.e., the degree of understanding of the relationships among the important variables) employed at the technical level. (The technologies at the other two levels are administrative and political "technologies," and are usually considered "arts" rather than technologies. There is also some uniformity in the state of these "arts" from organization to organization.) If the organization is involved in a process in which the technology is fairly well developed, then the methods of accounting, auditing and evaluating effectiveness are usually routinized and fairly certain. The budgeting processes at the technical level are primarily backward-looking and restricted to considerations of economic efficiency, i.e., the control aspects of budgeting. At the other two levels, budgeting also tends to be more concerned with efficiency matters. But if there is less sophistication in the technology, or if the technology is changing rpaidly, then the persons at the technical level will often attempt to build into the budgeting processes a more forward-looking orientation, looking beyond the boundaries of the organization and the specific task at hand. Emphasis on a planning or management orientation of budgeting will be more likely at the technical level, and the planning orientation will receive more attention at the managerial level.

The second factor is the amount of ambiguity in the organization and/or society about the desirability of the services provided by an organization or unit. If ambiguity is high, the technical level will be involved in legitimating its activities to both the managerial and institutional levels of the organization and to the task environment, forcing its budgeting activities to go beyond evaluations of simple processes or the matching of

resources and goals provided without question from the other suborganizations. All levels of the organization spend considerable time justifying the use of resources for the services or goods it provides. This necessitates the use of relatively higher proportions of the planning and management aspects of budgeting at the technical and managerial levels, and more intensive planning and mobilizing activity at the institutional level.

Environmental Factors

Two general characteristics of an organization's task environment--the dispersion or concentration of resources and the degree of stability of the resource suppliers--will significantly influence budgeting activity. If resources are widely dispersed or sources of supply and demand are rapidly changing, there will be more planning at all levels of the organization. This planning is done in an effort to reduce the uncertainty associated with the difficulties of mobilizing resources from a dispersed and unstable task environment.

PPB, Mobilization and Suborganizational Levels

There has been a great deal of confusion about the uses of PPB and little guidance about the suborganizational levels at which aspects of it are most effectively applied. Much of this confusion can be attributed to the lack of a general framework for the analysis of PPB as it relates to whole organizations. Yehezkel Dror has called this lack of a broader system framework to analyze PPB a dangerous omission in the theory of

budgeting as it now exists.[58] It is hoped that the mobilization theory of budgeting can provide a beginning for such a framework.

There are features of PPB which cover all three aspects of the budgeting process and are appropriate for all three levels of the organization. But, as both Schick and Gross assert, the primary emphasis of PPB is on functions related to the planning orientation or the aspects of budgeting found at the institutional and managerial levels of organizations.[59] Schick is very specific on this point (and adds that management and control aspects of budgeting should be delegated to "lower" levels of the organization under the logic of PPB):

> PPB is predicated on the primacy of the planning function; yet it strives for a multi-purpose budget system that gives adequate and necessary attention to the control and management areas. Even in the embryonic stage, PPB envisions the development of crosswalk grids for the conversion of data from a planning to a management and control framework, and back. PPB treats the three basic functions as compatible and complementary elements of a budget system, though not as coequal aspects of central budgeting. In ideal form, PPB would centralize the planning function and delegate primary managerial and control responsibilities to supervisory and operating levels respectively.[60]

Given the planning and high policy orientations of PPB, there has been too much emphasis on "structural changes" attributed to it. It is at the institutional and upper management levels where most high-level policy and long-range planning decisions are made and where most of these decisions have been made in the past. (In this light, one of the important contributions of PPB is that it attempts to build "crosswalks" or linkages among

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[58]Yehezkel Dror, "PPB and the Public Policy-Making System: Some Reflections on the Papers by Bertram M. Gross and Allen Schick," Public Administration Review, XXIX (March/April, 1969), p. 154.

[59]Schick, "Road to PPB," pp. 245-46 (italics added); Gross, "The New Systems Budgeting," p. 117.

[60]Schick, "Road to PPB," pp. 245-46. Italics mine.

the budgeting activities of the institutional level, the managerial level and the technical level of the organization.) The managerial and technical suborganizations dominated formal budgeting activities prior to the advent of PPB because there was less concern in the budgeting cycle with long-range planning, large-scale resource mobilization and goal formulation. It should come as no surprise that the planning aspects of PPB are centralized near the top of the organization, as that is the "normal" organizational location of such broad-gauge activities.

Further, the planning orientation is the most "political" of the functions of budgeting; no surprise need be expressed in "discoveries" that there is a great deal of strategic budgeting, rather than "objective" budgeting, connected with the planning orientation. It is through the planning orientation that alternative goals are weighed and the resources needed to fulfill these goals are sought. Perhaps this is why writers such as Gross[61] and Wildavsky[62] have observed that PPB can only be effectively carried out when an agency backs up its analytical skills in budgeting with considerable political clout.

At the managerial and technical levels of the organization the prescriptions of PPB are more in line with the conventional canons of budgeting. The managerial level is concerned primarily with what Schick calls performance budgeting (or with the processes of work and the design of programs and activities which bring specific goals and resources together). Resource mobilization is restricted to finding the concrete materials

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[61]Gross, "The New Systems Budgeting," p. 124.

[62]Aaron Wildavsky, "The Political Economy of Efficiency: Cost-Benefit Analysis, Systems Analysis, and Program Budgeting," Public Administration Review, XXVII (March, 1967), pp. 302-06.

needed to execute programs which are rather broadly defined by the institutional and upper managerial levels. At the technical level, you find the older considerations of accounting, rules for the transfer of funds, controls on the number of personnel to be hired, the costing of specific items of output and similar post hoc concerns. In line with more modern practices, there will also be analyses which evaluate the effectiveness of portions of programs or the activities of the technical level of the organization, such as the analyses conducted through PERT and operations research.

One of the more severe problems with PPB is associated with the training of new personnel. The planning orientation of PPB calls for people with the perspective of the managerial and institutional levels of the organization. They must utilize new planning and mobilization techniques in resource mobilization and goal formulation and then try to integrate their work with the work at the other levels of the organization. Several writers have noted both the need for different types of personnel[63] and the new personnel who came into budgeting with PPB, but few have gone beyond identifying them as "economists." Although many of the new personnel are economists, there are no unique aspects of their training which uniquely qualify them for the value-laden task of goal formulation, gives them superior political skills to mobilize resources, or gives them greater foresight in long-range planning.

Finally, most of the budgeting literature does not consider the differences in budgeting styles arising from differences in product or product mix, sophistication or types of technology, ambiguity or certainty

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[63]Dror, "PPB and Public Policy-Making," p. 154; Schick, "Road to PPB," p. 245; Gross, "The New Systems Budgeting," pp. 117, 129.

in goals sought and variations in the environmental setting of the organization. Some comments are made about the effects of producing a tangible product as compared to producing an intangible service. These observations are usually not systematically related to discussions of the budgeting system or how the product affects styles of budgeting at all levels of the organization. Better criteria than tangibility for evaluating the effects of a product on the budgeting process are the sophistication and type of technology producing it, the societal (or organizational) ambiguity or certainty concerning the desirability of producing the product and the state of the task and contextual environments of the organization. These criteria may lead to better understandings of when the planning, management or control aspects of budgeting are more prevalent at the institutional, managerial or technical levels of the organization.

Summary

In this paper it has been suggested that the acquisition of resources is a general process that occurs in all social organizations. The most active aspect of this process is the mobilization of resources from the environment. The success or failure of organizations in mobilizing these resources will determine whose goals and values will be fulfilled.

A number of factors have been suggested as having a significant influence on the mobilization of resources. These factors include the suborganizational levels within organizations, the types and sophistication of technologies and the levels of professionalism, unionization or other extra-organizational associations of the personnel in the various suborganizations. The important environmental characteristics include the

dispersion or concentration of resource suppliers, their number and the relative stability or shifting of the environment.

These concepts were applied to some of the processes of budgeting in organizations because budgeting is so closely associated with the mobilizing of resources. It was suggested that certain aspects of budgeting and certain aspects of resource mobilization are closely associated, and that budgeting processes might be better understood if analyzed through the framework of the theory of resource mobilization.

In future research, this theory will be refined and applied to the mobilization and budgeting of federal aid to education. It is hoped that such an application will show the utility of this theory in mobilizing resources for specific organizations.